

In the claims:

Cancel claims 1 -16 and enter new claims 17-29, as follows. All claims are indicated in the listing with their current status.

17. (Currently added) A dedicated electronic document answering machine, separate from a personal computer, comprising:

a port for connecting to the Internet network;

a system for connecting to the Internet on request by the user via the port;

and

an indicator for availability of documents;

wherein the answering machine on users request connects to the Internet, and makes at least a portion of an electronic document available to the user as audible voice.

18. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 wherein the audible voice system comprises a speaker.

19. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 wherein the electronic documents can be downloaded.

20. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 19 wherein the electronic documents include one or more e-mails.

21. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 additionally comprising a communication port for connecting to a host personal computer (PC), wherein the electronic document answering machine is enabled to

communicate downloaded documents to the PC for processing.

22. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 21 wherein the answering machine is responsive to commands from the PC to connect to the Internet and download documents.

23. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 22 wherein the answering machine is operated by the PC and has no separate CPU.

24. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine as in claim 17 wherein, in connecting to the Internet, the answering machine connects to an Internet mail server.

25. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 17 further comprising an alert apparatus for alerting a user to the availability of an electronic document.

26. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 25 further comprising an input apparatus for initiating the process of converting a document to audible voice.

27. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 25 wherein the alert apparatus comprises one or both an audible alert and a visual alert.

28. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 25 wherein the alert apparatus comprises an LED that lights for availability of one or more documents.

29. (Currently added) The electronic document answering machine of claim 26 wherein the alert is an LED coupled with a pushbutton as the input apparatus.